

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Hovey Introduces Legislation Addressing Issues of Importance to 112th District



Responding to constituent concerns about a variety of issues of importance to Monroe and Newtown, state Representative DebraLee Hovey has introduced several measures that would provide tax relief, protect children, improve traffic safety and help consumers.

“Over the past few months, many of my constituents have taken the time to call, write, e-mail or respond to my legislative surveys about issues of importance to them. To help address those concerns, I have introduced several bills that will be considered during the 2006 legislative session,” said Representative Hovey, R-112th District.

The bills Representative Hovey has proposed would:

1 Require public hearings to be held on proposed changes to municipal zoning regulations and plans of conservation and development. The measure also would require that such changes be ratified by a two-thirds majority at a town meeting or referendum.

1 Change the sales tax-free week in August when residents can make back-to-school purchases from the week beginning the third Sunday in August to the week beginning the second Sunday in August. The change will enable the tax-free week to take place before the school year gets underway.

1 Establish an exemption from the state income tax for all pension income.

1 Require home improvement contractors to distinguish between charges for labor and charges for materials on their bills and invoices. The measure is intended to make their bills easier to understand and prevent them from including a sales tax on labor.

1 Require schools to set aside a minimum of one hour per school day for students to engage in physical exercise.

1 Prohibit credit card companies that do business in Connecticut from extending unsolicited offers of credit to residents under the age of 21. Violators would be fined an amount equivalent to 50 percent of the amount of credit offered in the solicitation.

l Require persons driving tractor trailer trucks on divided limited access highways to operate their vehicles only in the far right lane, except when passing other vehicles or to avoid obstructions. The bill would improve highway safety by slowing down tractor-trailer trucks and reducing the number of accidents that occur when smaller vehicles pass tractor trailers on the right.

l Provide that persons convicted of committing sexual crimes against minors undergo psychological evaluations. If the assessment determines such individuals are pedophiles and incapable of being rehabilitated, courts would have to sentence the offenders to life in prison. The measure is intended to take pedophiles off the street permanently to prevent them from preying on children.

l Require towns to allow equestrians to use local trails if state money was used to establish or maintain such trails. The legislation is intended to preserve space where horses may be ridden and maintain Connecticut's rural ambience.

l Exempt students under the age of 25 from serving on juries. The intent of the bill is to ensure jury duty does not interfere with students' ability to complete their education.

l Require all-terrain vehicles and vehicles powered by engines of a certain size to be registered. The registration fees would be graduated based on the size of the engine. The bill would make it possible for witnesses who observe individuals operating such vehicles improperly or illegally to report them to the authorities and enable police to accurately identify and apprehend offenders.

l Prohibit personal watercraft (jet ski) operators from transporting children under the age of six. The proposal is designed to keep children from sustaining serious or fatal injuries in an accident or other mishap on the water.

l Provide state funding in the amount of \$5 million for capital improvements to the Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport.

“Even though this year's session is a short one and not all of these measures will pass, it is important to get the issues and problems they are intended to address on the table,” Representative Hovey said. “Oftentimes, bills that fail in any given year are enacted during subsequent General Assembly sessions. Most issues that lend themselves to legislative solutions do not go away after a few months. As more people become concerned about them, pressure for remedies mount and it becomes more likely that a previously-proposed bill designed to resolve a problem will gain the support it needs to become law.”